State Standards for Internet Markup Language

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Purpose of Appearance
To recommend that the Board revise the State Internet Standards for Hypertext Markup Language, that were made effective April 10, 2002.

Previous ISB Appearances
April 10, 2002: The HTML 4.0 state standard was superseded by HTML 4.01 to correct errors and incorporate changes made by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C).

December 10, 1999: The Washington State Information Technology (IT) Standards & Protocol Directions were presented and the Board endorsed HTML 4.0 as a state standard.

Staff Recommendation to the Board
Staff recommends that the Board adopt the updated State Standards for Internet Markup Language.

Background
The *State Standards for Internet Markup Language* contains the updated language to the existing Information Services Board State Internet Standard - Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) available at: http://dis.wa.gov/portfolio/801S.htm.

Stakeholders that participated in the revision process include the state's Customer Advisory Board, the Customer Advisory Board Infrastructure Subcommittee, the Forrest Application Developers Committee, and the state's Webmasters workgroup.

The proposal is to upgrade to Extensible Hypertext Markup Language (XHTML) as the standard for new Web-based services development. Alternately, HTML may be used depending on business needs, but is not recommended for new Web-based applications.

The new state standards also provide guidance for using XTHML versus HTML. XHTML is a proven technology that is XML-based and designed to work with XML user agents; however, some Web development tools that create and maintain content may not support it. As such, the proposed standards allow agencies to choose between the two technologies depending on business needs.

XHTML and HTML are common mark-up languages used for presenting information via the Internet. HTML is based on a limited, defined set of variables and has gone though various improvements to be able to deliver additional information like graphics, sound, and video. A Web browser, such as Internet Explorer or Netscape, interprets the HTML and presents the information to the user.

XHTML 1.0 is the latest World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) recommendation for creating Web content. XHTML document types are XML-based, and are designed to work with XML-based user agents. XHTML is extensible and allows for creation of additional sets of variables so that additional content can be delivered via the Web.